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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

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U. S. DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF INFORMATION

(Release on receipt)

SUBJECT: "Hired Women Needed Again" - Information from the Women's Land Army,
U. S. Department of Agriculture

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Here's something for women with a special slant to it...you'll see what I mean as I go along.

Farm people always face hazards from the weather...but during the war...farmers have added hazards in the form of 4 million regular workers drained away by the war...and they have less machinery. How...you may ask...have farmers and their families not only met their wartime food goals but exceeded them.

Well...here's part of the answer...and it comes from Mrs. Sophie Meligan of Beadle county, South Dakota. I'll tell the story in Mrs. Meligan's own words.

"During harvest"...Mrs. Meligan says..."I rode the binder and then learned to drive the tractor. When the grain was cut...we all pitched in and did the shocking...my husband and I and two older daughters who are now 11 and 13 years old.

"I drove the tractor"...(remember these are still Mrs. Meligan's words)...
"and my husband rode the corn cultivator. While my husband was away on the threshing run...I did all the milking and separating alone. The children helped to feed the pigs and calves. The older children helped to milk. In the fall...I helped stack cane fodder and also helped to pick corn by hand...as we don't own a mechanical picker. Each year of the war I've added a few new jobs to the list. For instance...last year...while my husband was summer fallowing...I drove the tractor during the noon hour and sometimes in the morning. This helped to get a few extra hours of work done each day.

"We stacked our oats"...(I'm still using Mrs. Meligan's words)...
"so that less help was needed to thresh them. I drove the team on the hay bucker while our oldest daughter drove the tractor on the stacker and my husband did the stacking. Our youngest daughter had dinner ready for us when we came in at noon."

(more)

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Mrs. Meligan and thousands of other farm women like her...and thousands of their town and city cousins....are a big part of the answer to how farmers have met....and exceeded their wartime food goals.

There's an example of what I mean in Illinois. I take Illinois only because I have the figures at hand...the same thing is true in a different way in our own state. One of the biggest seasonal jobs Illinois farmers have to scope with is de-tasseling hybrid seed corn. Last year over 25,000 women and men and boys and girls from towns and cities volunteered to help see farmers through this job...and they did.

This year....the farmers will need the help of town and city women more than ever. The supply of regular farm help is down to rock bottom as farmers hitch their suspenders and go into the fourth year of wartime food production.

Town women like Mrs. Don Baker of Lakewood, Ohio are already asking where they can find out about the Women's Land Army of the U.S. Crop Corps. Mrs. Baker is 28 years old. Her husband is overseas and she likes outdoor work...so she wants a farm job. Well....Mrs. Baker has been told what all women who want to do farm work are told...to get in touch with the county agricultural agent.

If you can't locate the county agent....next best thing to do is write the Women's Land Army supervisor at your State College of Agriculture.

The Women's Land Army needs three-quarters of a million workers this year. No matter when the war in Europe ends...it won't change the food situation much. We'll still need all the food we can grow. And farmers will need all the help they can get.

So listen to the call in your community and if it comes....answer it. Farm work's hard work...but food production is our job on the home front.

LET'S DO IT.

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